



BeInSynch

Education Newsletter

4TH QUARTER EDITION • 2019

Welcome to the 2019 4th Quarter Education Newsletter! Our goal is to share information with you from experts, volunteers, coaches and officials. If you have suggestions to be included in future newsletters, please send them to shari@usasynchro.org.

- INSIDE THIS ISSUE**
- SafeSport – **NEW & Important SafeSport Information**
 - How to Strengthen Young Athletes' Confidence
 - Figure Tips: Seagull, Swordtail and Jupiter
 - Can's, Not Can'ts
 - Breath Holding Safety Guidelines
 - Concussion Training

THAT MOMENT WHEN....



... you are ready to jump into your first practice!



... you get your first noseclip!

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 6-7
Level Test 3-5
New Canaan, CT

December 7-8
Level Test 1-5
Norton, MA

December 8
Level Test 1-5
McLean, VA

December 8
Level Test 1
Huntersville, NC

December 14-16
Level Test 3-5
Irving, TX

December 15
Level Test 2-5
Kirkland, WA

December 15
Level Test 4-5
Cincinnati, OH

January 18-20
Age Group Natl Team Trials – Phase 1 & 2
Scottsdale, AZ

January 18-20
Boys in Synch Camp
Las Vegas, NV

Feb 28-March 1
North Zone Jr/Sr/13-15 Championships
Cincinnati, OH

March 6-8
South Zone Jr/Sr/13-15 Championships
San Antonio, TX

March 26-29
2020 Collegiate & Sr National Championships
Mesa, AZ

April 1-5
2020 US Junior & 13-15 National Championships And Age Group National Team Trials – Phase 3
Mesa, AZ

April 5th
Sr Natl Team Trials
Mesa, AZ

June 27 – July 4
2020 Jr Olympic Championships
Gainesville, FL

VERY IMPORTANT SAFESPORT MANDATE & COURSE INFO!!!

Starting **April 15th, 2019** the SafeSport course was combined into one 90 minute training. New users will be presented with the single course automatically. If you have already started the 3 module course you will not have access to the single course, you will continue with the 3 modules that you started. **Only Coaches need to send in the “SafeSport Trained” certificate to coachcerts@usasynchro.org.** All individuals completing the course will be listed on the Certifications List, which is posted under Resources.

IMPORTANT: If your expiration date was in 2018 or earlier (refer to the posted SafeSport completion or CCP lists), you will need to take the Full Course ASAP. After completing the Full Course, you will be required to complete the Refresher course every year going forward.

The 2nd Refresher Course is now available. Please watch your expiration dates!

NEW: When you register with USA Synchro, you will receive instructions and the Access Code to complete the course.

As mandated by The Center for SafeSport, ALL individuals listed on USA Synchro’s required list (included on the last page of this newsletter), MUST complete the Full SafeSport course as soon as possible! **NOTE: there is a new requirement for 18 year old athletes training or competing with minors MUST complete the course.**

The Center for SafeSport Audit



The Center for SafeSport recently completed their audit of USA Synchro. This information will not be posted publicly, but we felt it important to share with our membership. Because of the work that you are doing and the commitment of the organization to athlete safety we had a strong report returned. Thank you for your efforts to keep our sport a safe place for athletes to participate. [USA Synchro SafeSport Audit 2019](#)

NEW – U.S. Center for SafeSport Adult Athlete Training Module

This month, the Center launched a new training course geared towards adult athletes. This free course is designed with adult athletes in mind and will help adults better understand important topics such as power imbalances, consent, retaliation, the importance of bystander intervention, and how to report misconduct. Visit athletesafety.org to learn more and be sure to use the code **ADULTATHLETENGB** to start your free training.



Virtual Athlete Townhalls

The U.S. Center of SafeSport will host the final Virtual Athlete Townhall on Wednesday, December 4th at 1:00 MST.

Please encourage your athletes to [register for the townhall](#) to provide feedback and insight on key athlete safety issues and hear directly from Ju’Riese Colon, CEO of the Center.

TAKE A LISTEN



Podcasts worth your time:

“Champions Act Like Champions Before they Become Champions” by Travis Daugherty [click here](#)

“How to Create a Season to Remember”, by Jack Perconte, [click here](#)

“Success is a Continuous Journey”, by Richard St John [click here](#)

Great Reads



They Call Me Coach, [click here](#)

The Chimp Paradox (for sale on Amazon), [click here](#)

“Meet the Country’s Most Unconventional Young Coach”, [click here](#)



Bridges should be one of the first things that your athletes work on. It is not only good for flexibility, but it opens up the chest, which tends to be a problem with doing too much freestyle.

Don’t forget – working on flexibility & strengthening of your wrists is just as important as any other part of your body!

When you are working on spins, you should train going both directions!

Videos to Enjoy



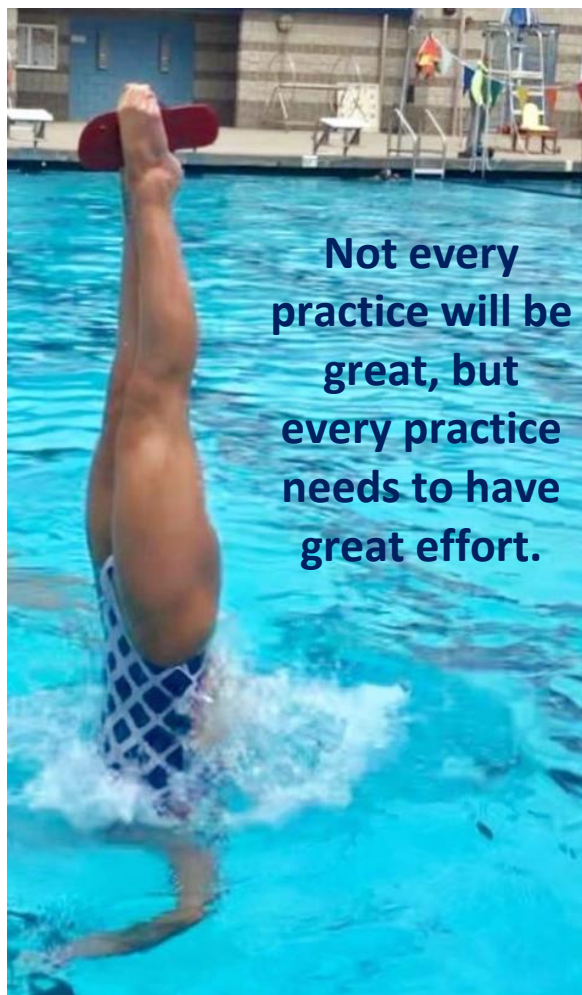
Ride Home – The Power of The Pick Up, [click here](#)

Attitude, by Noah Hoffman, [click here](#)

Leadership, by John Kessel, [click here](#)

“The Cost of Winning”, by Matt Young [click here](#)

FINA Youth World Championships (13-15 Age Group), [click here](#)



Not every practice will be great, but every practice needs to have great effort.

HOW TO STRENGTHEN YOUNG ATHLETES' CONFIDENCE

By Patrick Cohn,
www.youthsportspsychology.com

Do your young athletes start to doubt themselves and lose **confidence** when they are criticized or given feedback in sports?

One soccer player puts it this way:

"I'm often challenged mentally during practice if a teammate tells me how I can't do a certain thing, such as properly marking my opponent. I end up questioning my ability to do so, therefore affecting my performance negatively."

Self-doubt, which this athlete describes well, is one of the biggest mental game challenges in youth sports.

Young athletes who experience self-doubt need to embrace mental game skills that will prevent them from allowing others' negativity—or other issues—hurt their confidence.

Sports kids possess high levels of confidence for two reasons: First, they focus on the things they can control and not the opinions of others or distractions that sneak into their minds.

Second, **confident** kids have a strong belief in their ability to perform. These sports kids even believe they can produce results in competition, even if no one else has ever produced those results.

Here's how Steph Curry, guard for the Golden State Warriors, describes his own confidence:

"I don't listen much to any of what anybody says about what we [the Golden State Warriors] can or cannot do or what I can do personally. I don't know if that's stubbornness or ultimate self-confidence but it's just the fact that I know who I'm rolling with in that locker room, we just gotta believe."

**Positivity is
like a muscle:
keep exercising
it, and it
becomes a
habit.**

Natalie Massenet



Here are 3 ways to help strengthen athletes' confidence, especially when they're feeling self-doubt:

=>Remind them that confidence comes from within. It doesn't come from others, and young athletes shouldn't let others drag down their confidence.

=>Kids can build confidence with repetition and drilling, but they must believe they can carry these skills to competition.

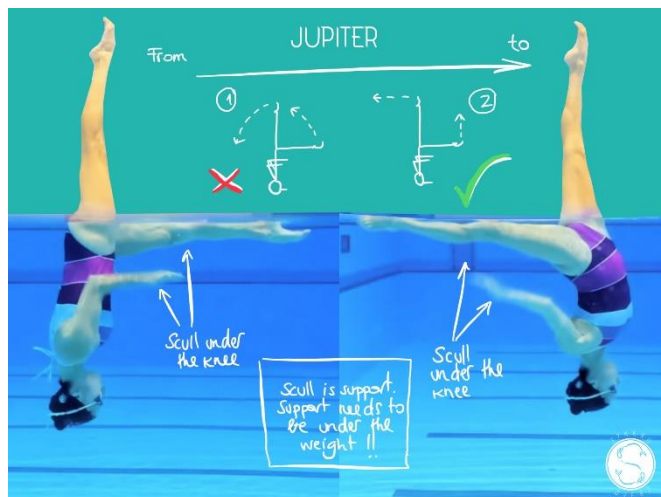
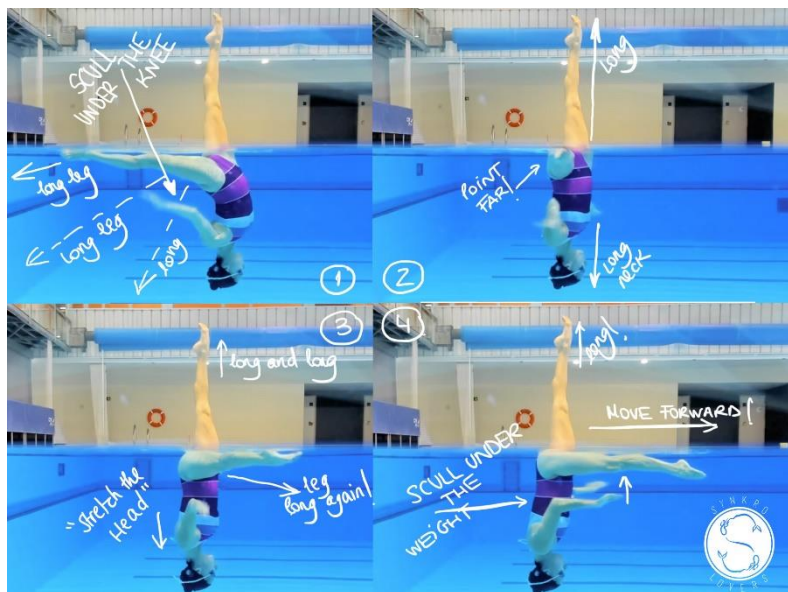
=>Young athletes should always look inside and focus on their talents. At the same time, they should strive to improve weaknesses.

Always remember:

Confidence comes from inside, not outside. That is why it is called self-confidence!

MORE FIGURE TIPS FROM COACH ANDREA

By Andrea Fuentes
Sr NT Head Coach
www.synkrolovers.com



JUPITER

As is in everything, extension is essential! In this case to:

=>Have more **height** being the lightest leg (you know that a hard body weights more than a flaccid one).

=>Have more **stability**. If we have extension, we have more balance and with it, we are able to move a leg without the body being affected. In common words: we do not bounce as much.

=>Ensure more **verticality**, since by extending the head towards the bottom and legs towards their ends (as if you wanted them to be longer), we manage to go from a curved position to a more loaded one without losing balance.

As you can see in the 1st photo, what I insist most is in the extension and, in addition, in opposite directions: leg towards the ceiling and head towards the bottom of the pool. Then the moving leg also has to **try to touch** the **wall**, you will see that it is much easier!

Another trick that helps a lot: in the **knight**, as there is more weight behind, scull more back, almost below the knee! And in the **crane** close more the scull in front, because, as you can see in the photo, the weight is more in front of the vertical!

Then we have some ways that make it easier to understand the movement. **Visualizing actions** or **situations** can help us to correct it well. For example, in this case:

Imagine you have a pencil on each big toe. To get to **knight** from **crane**, if you were a compass, you would draw a semicircle, right? So to get much more height, try, instead of drawing a circle, draw a straight line. Like a square.

In the 2nd photo you'll see what I mean. Under the name Jupiter you can see how I have drawn the conventional way of going to knight (option 1) and the other alternative to get much **more height, stability** and **extension**.

As you can see in the photo, it is also very important to achieve **height** and **balance**, to scull below the center of weight. For example, if you scull as if it were a crane on the knight (closing the scull until the hands almost touch each other) you will be sculling under a non-existent weight and surely you will unintentionally have your leg facing your face to compensate for this support. Therefore, scull back every time you open!

“We will soon all look back
incredulously that athletes ever swam
without head protection of this kind

*Rowdy Gaines, Olympic Gold Medalist,
International and Masters Hall of Famer*



GAME-CHANGING FEATURES AND BENEFITS INCLUDE...



HIT Honeycomb Impact Technology® –
patented technology designed to reduce
the shock of accidental and repetitive
head strikes in the pool



TEKFIT® – designed with no wrinkles
and built for racing



DURABILITY – tear-resistant, premium
silicone that is designed to outlast
other caps

We invented the
world's only protective
swim cap® - but it does
so much more!

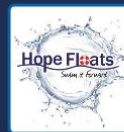


The World's Only Protective Swim Cap®

Olympic Gold Medalist,
Rowdy Gaines



Proudly Endorsed By



www.hammerheadswimcaps.com

Can's, Not Can'ts

By Alan Goldberg,
Peak Performance for
Athletes, Coaches & Parents

As an athlete and person you are always limited most by what you believe you can and cannot do. Your beliefs fuel your efforts, desires and motivation. When you think that you CAN'T do something, when you set artificial limits on yourself, then your behaviors will organize around this limiting belief. You will be less likely to try new things and take risks. Your efforts will be less intense and effective. After repeated failures and frustrations, your staying power and persistence will be weak. In short, you will set yourself up to prove yourself right. You won't be able to do it! When you believe that you CAN accomplish something, when you allow yourself to expand the realm of possibility, when you entertain new horizons for yourself even though they might stretch you and be scary, then your behaviors will organize around this expansive belief. You will be far more willing to try new things and take risks. Your efforts to pursue that new goal will be strong and powerful. When you're repeatedly knocked backwards on your butt by failure and disappointment, you will be undeterred and get up more quickly and keep on keeping on. In the end, because you believed that you could do it, you did! Your positive belief set you up to prove yourself right.

Far too many athletes lock their potential up in artificial "can'ts." "I can't do that!" "That's impossible for me." "I'll never be able to achieve that." "I'm just not that good." etc. When you limit yourself in this way, you end up putting imaginary boundaries on what's possible for yourself. While these boundaries may be just imaginary and "all in your head," they are still just as powerful in holding you back as if they were real physical boundaries. Don't allow yourself to play these kinds of tricks on yourself. You have no idea what's possible. You have no clue what you can actually accomplish once you put your mind to it. Suspend your disbelief. Stretch your limits. Step outside of your comfort zone. Dream big! Remember, success always comes in cans, not can'ts!

**IT'S ALL ABOUT
THE FUN!!**

Thank you to everyone
who contributed.
Hope you enjoy these fun ideas!

Musical Skills: Have the athletes eggbeater in a circle & play music, when the music stops the athletes have to do whatever skill has been chosen until the music starts up again. (Surprise - no one is taken out of the game)

Emotions: Express the following emotions in different ways, 1st Lap - face only, 2nd Lap - body/no arms, 3rd Lap - arms/legs with no face, 4th Lap - everything. You can also use different types of music to become certain characters: aliens, clowns, queens/kings.

Movement: With music perform improv in different ways. Examples - arms & legs but not allowed to bend elbows or knees, only in circles no forward or back allowed, everything at 45° angle.

Eggbeater Wars with partners: 1) facing each other with hands clasped and push against each other, 2) one behind the other, one partner puts 50-80% of their weight on partner's shoulders - try not to be dunked!

Practices do not have to always be synchro specific. Try these activities to add to your FUN!

#1 - [Click here](#)

#2 - [Click here](#)

#3 - [Click here](#)

#4 - [Click here](#)



BREATH HOLDING SAFETY GUIDELINES

By Teresa Alentejano, PhD

Any breath holding activity needs to be done within a highly supervised environment, independent on the age of the swimmers. If you are planning a workout for a senior athlete who does not have a coach on deck – plan accordingly - ask a partner to follow during the distance, even if it is for 25m only. If you are planning a game for a 10 and under and they have to pass by 6 coloured loops before coming up – keep an eye on them and ask them to go one at a time. Always keep an eye on your swimmers if they are underwater.

When you are doing unders, plan your distances in a way that the breath holding distance ends where you are standing. This way if needed you are right there to rescue. Never plan unders with weightbelts. They will not give you any extra training advantage and it may delay rescue in the event that a rescue is needed.

Do not allow the swimmers to hyperventilate prior to going under water. Do not allow any bobbing before going under either. This minimizes the feeling of running out of breath but prevent safety mechanisms to detect the need to breathe. (Hyperventilation decreases CO₂ levels and prevents chemoceptors from identifying that there are high and unsafe levels of CO₂, even though O₂ levels are depleted. When the levels of O₂ reach 25 to 30 mmHg, body safety mechanisms shut off all non-essential functions of the body, including consciousness, so as to extend oxygen availability to the brain and heart.

Water temperature colder than 82 degrees decrease the ability to breath hold, so doing unders at the competition pool versus the dive tank decreases the ability to make a specific distance – take this into account when planning practices. The reason for this is that the body needs to use some of the oxygen stored to keep the core temperature stable, decreasing the availability of oxygen to the exercise.

Intensity of what is done underwater also changes the amount of time a swimmer can be underwater. Eg, swimming breaststroke x whip kick only – when less muscles are involved less oxygen is used, but in general less distance is covered as well.

It is most recommended that swimmers start breath holding at around 80% of their total lung capacity. This way, when they submerge they can still hold comfortably this volume. When the swimmer goes underwater the pressure increases at a rate of 1/10 of an atmosphere for each meter underwater. Not having totally inflated lungs makes it easier to withstand the increase in pressure.

Avoid contests like: “Who stays under the most” or “who swims under the longest distance”. You could have 2 swimmers blacking out at the same time and it will make the rescue more complicated. Slow progressive increases in distance and/or time at any age is recommended. Training of breath holding should be individualized, respecting individual limits.

As in every training ability tracking progress can help develop the ability to breath hold. Record timing and/or distance on a regular basis can be effective, but use it as a coaching reference, not to harass the swimmer or demand improvements. Avoid sharing the info with the swimmer, so that they are not obsessed by improving the length/time they are underwater



BREATH HOLDING SAFETY GUIDELINES – (CONTINUED)

What are the symptoms prior to blacking out

Anecdotal information leads us to believe that there are intrinsic and extrinsic symptoms prior to blacking out. Sharing this knowledge with the swimmers may help them identify the stage they are in and prevent them from getting to the stage of blacking out.

Some of the intrinsic reported symptoms are:

Euphoria “the feeling everything is marvelous and you do not need to hold your breath anymore”, Tingling extremities. When they are feeling these symptoms – IT IS TIME TO COME UP, NO MATTER HOW FAR THE WALL IS!

Some of the extrinsic seen symptoms are:

Lack of muscle control (person starts shaking), Dizziness, Confusion, Bobbing in the water.

Why are figures ending with a walkout more likely to lead to blacking out?

When the swimmer is holding their breath at the end of the figure (arch position) the partial pressure of oxygen in their lungs is at a low level, but not to the extent that the body will shut down to save oxygen. The athlete feels the need to breathe but does not think it is unbearable. The body being still at a reasonable depth the partial pressure should be above 30mmHg. When the swimmer keeps controlling the end of the figure and moves towards the surface there is an acute drop of pressure both because of the work being done and because of the decrease in the atmospheric pressure. These two combined effects will rapidly decrease the oxygen levels in the body to the level where the body shuts off consciousness. At this point the athlete loses control of their body and is unable to bring their head to the surface.

If the head position during the surface arch is excessively tipped back, it can also cut circulation to the brain and lead to blacking out.

Stress levels and competitiveness prior to performing a figure at competition are also factors that may lead to blacking out. Stress increases heart rate beat which in turn increases oxygen consumption, decreasing the time available to perform. If the swimmer decides to perform a figure at competition at a much slower pace than at practice, they may be in danger. Coaches should stress the idea that the tempo used at practice is the one the athlete should use at competitions.

Safety consideration: As much as possible, avoid training long figures and figures that end up with a walkout in diving tanks. The depth of the pool may delay rescue in the event that a rescue is needed. Also, do not use a weight belt when doing the whole figure. In the event of a blackout this will speed up rescue. If you only have a dive tank to train at, make sure you have 100% of your attention on every single swimmer towards the end of the figure and let the lifeguard know that you are doing a reasonably risky activity during this section of your practice. This same recommendation holds for competitions. Let the lifeguards on duty know in advance which are the figures that may lead to incidents. Being cautious is very positive and could save precious time if a swimmer is in need of rescue.

CrashCourse Concussion Education

Did you know that 1 in 5 High School Athletes will get a concussion at some time?

More than 2.5 million young people suffer a concussion in the United States each year. With proper care, most concussions can heal within 10 days, but the overwhelming majority of students, parents and coaches are unaware of the latest science about prevention and treatment of concussions. If not treated properly, a concussion may have lasting physical, emotional and cognitive effects.

What is CrashCourse?

CrashCourse is concussion education reimaged for today's generation, providing the latest medically-accurate information about the prevention and treatment of concussions.

To receive a "Certificate of Completion", you can [CLICK HERE](#) to take the free CrashCourse Concussion Education curriculum.

Circle of Confidence

Have your athletes sit in a circle. Give each of them a sheet of paper or a large index card. Each athlete writes their name on the paper and under their name they write down the word "strengths".

Each athlete's paper is passed around the circle so each one receives strength from their teammates. When your team completes the list, have each athlete verbalize at least 5-6 strengths using "I am" statements.

RANDOM LITTLE TIDBITS

=>There has been an addition to the individuals required to complete the SafeSport course – now **ALL** 18 year old athletes who train or compete with minor age athletes must complete the course.

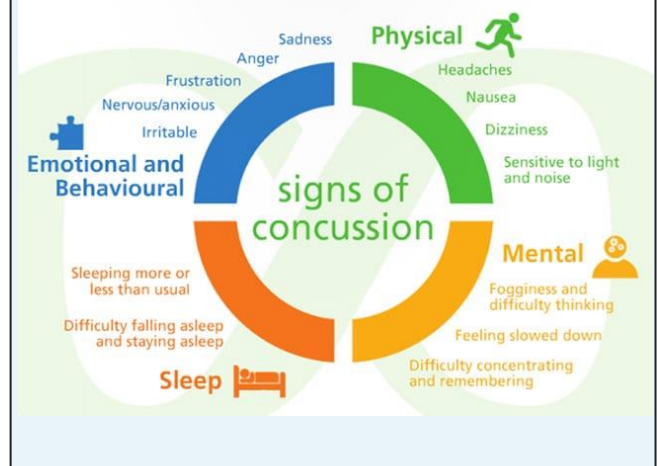
=>There are currently MANY coaches whose CCP Level and/or SafeSport course expires in 2020 – Please make sure to stay up to date. Send ALL certificates to coachcerts@usasynchro.org.

=>To recertify your CCP Level you must repeat the course for your current level or higher or attend Coaches College.

=>CCP Levels 2 & 3 are being revamped. Level 2 will now be completely online and Level 3 will be a course with more content. Both courses are scheduled to release at the beginning of 2020.

"You don't inspire your teammates by showing them how amazing you are. You inspire them by showing them how amazing they are."

—Robyn Benincasa



SAFESPORT – IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Everyone has a role to play in creating a healthy environment for our sport and our athletes. SafeSport helps raise awareness about misconduct in sport, promote open dialogue, and provide training and resources. Providing a safe environment to protect the health and well-being of athletes is a high priority for USA Synchronized Swimming. **PLEASE note the new timeline for completing the Full and Refresher Courses!**

PLEASE NOTE: It is now **MANDATORY** for the following individuals to complete the course.

USA Synchro

(Staff, Board Members, Support Staff, and Consultants)

National Team

(Head Coaches and Assistants, Consultants, Volunteers & Chaperones)

National Talent, Olympic Development Camps & National Elite Camp

(Head Coaches and Assistants, Consultants, Volunteers & Chaperones)

National Team Athletes

All National Team Athletes currently listed in the USADA Registered Testing Pool

All members of all USSS Committees, Subcommittees and Boards

(18 years old and over)

Club Teams

(Any Coaches, Chaperones, Support Staff and Volunteers who have constant and consistent interaction and/or authority over athletes)

(This includes, but is not limited to: Dance, Acrobatics, Flexibility, Swimming Staff, etc., at any national or local Training Facility)

NEW: Any Athlete 18 years or older who practices or competes with minor age athletes

Approved Club Options/Private Invitations/ICE Program Participants

(All Staff - including Coaches, Managers, Chaperones and Adults who have constant and consistent

Interaction and/or authority over athletes while traveling with the athletes, excludes Adults who are attending as fans)

All Judges

(Levels 1 through FINA A & Emeritus)

Optional but highly recommended

Club Teams - BOD members

USA Synchro has added an area on the website solely dedicated to SafeSport. Under Resources, you will find information on how to take the course, the complete list of individuals who have taken the course,